

COVID-19 VACCINES: ANSWERS TO FIVE COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1

What does the Church say about the COVID-19 vaccines?

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (Vatican), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Catholic Bishops of Michigan have all stated it is morally acceptable to use the COVID-19 vaccines.

2

Do I have a moral obligation to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccination is voluntary. "The morality of vaccination depends not only on the duty to protect one's own health, but also on the duty to pursue the common good. In the absence of other means to stop or even prevent the epidemic, the common good may recommend vaccination,"¹ especially to protect the most vulnerable in our society. In this way, being vaccinated against COVID-19 should be considered an act of love of our neighbor.

3

Is it true that there is a connection between some vaccines and abortion?

Neither the Pfizer nor the Moderna vaccines have used fetal cell lines in their design, development, and production. However, such a cell line was used to test both vaccines. Even though the vaccines were tested using a compromised cell line, this does not establish a connection between the vaccine recipient and abortion. Consequently, use of these vaccines is morally permitted. "Any vaccine that relies on these historic cell lines will not require new abortions."²

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is more morally problematic. It utilized a compromised cell line in its design, production, development, as well as confirmatory testing. This vaccine may be received only if there are no other alternatives.

4

Is it morally permissible to receive the COVID-19 vaccines?

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has indicated that it is morally permissible to be vaccinated if there are no alternatives and there are serious health risks. Such serious health risks are present due to the current pandemic. If a choice is given among the variety of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, the one with the least connection to abortion-derived fetal cell lines (e.g. Pfizer and Moderna) should be chosen.

5

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe and effective?

The Church and her leaders do not claim to be authorities on the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. You should bring your questions about the COVID-19 vaccines to your primary physician. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) affirms that the vaccines authorized for use in the U.S. have met all safety requirements essential for such authorization.

